

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, EGEN, SENV, FR, EEC

SUBJECT: FRENCH PARTICIPATION IN SPOKANE EXPOSITION

REFERENCE: PARIS 21585

1. HAVING HEARD NOTHING FURTHER FROM FINANCE MINISTER GISCARD D'ESTAING CONCERNING HIS DECISION ON FRENCH PARTICIPATION IN SPOKANE EXPOSITION IN SPITE OF PERSONAL APPEALS BY MYSELF, COMMISSIONER GENERAL HENDERSON, AND SECRETARY SHULTZ, AND IN SPITE OF GISCARD'S PROMISE TO HENDERSON THAT HE WOULD INFORM US OF HIS DECISION BY END OF AUGUST, WE DECIDED TO RAISE THE MATTER WITH MINISTRY OF FINANCE. EMBOFFS FIRST SPOKE TO DUTET, ONE OF GISCARD'S ASSISTANTS WHO HAS BEEN STAFFING THIS QUESTION FOR THE MINISTER. THEY NOTED THAT FRENCH BUDGET FOR 1974 WAS SUBMITTED TO PARLIAMENT SEPTEMBER 19 AND SAID THEY ASSUMED THIS MEANT DECISION HAD BEEN TAKEN ON SPOKANE. DUTET REPLIED THAT MATTER WAS STILL UNDER CONSIDERATION BY GISCARD, OR, TO PUT IT

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MORE ACCURATELY, THAT TISCARD WAS STILL CONSIDERING WHETHER OR

NOT TO REVERSE A NEGATIVE DECISION THAT HAD BEEN TAKEN BY THE GOF. HE SAID THAT THE MATTER WAS ON GISCARD'S DESK AT THE PRESENT MOMENT AND EXPRESSED SOME HOPE THAT A DECISION MIGHT BE MADE PRIOR TO GISCARD'S DEPARTURE FOR NAIROBI LAST NIGHT. DURING THIS CONVERSATION, DUTET HIMSELF BETRAYED MARKED LACK OF ENTHUSIASM FOR FRENCH PARTICIPATION.

2. IN THE LIGHT OF THIS INFORMATION, I JUDGED THAT A FURTHER PERSONAL APPROACH TO GISCARD MIGHT BE HELPFUL AND I TELEPHONED HIM YESTERDAY MORNING. GISCARD TOLD ME THAT THE MATTER WOULD BE DECIDED IN OCTOBER WHEN DECISIONS WERE TO BE TAKEN AS TO PARTICIPATION IN EXPOSITIONS, FAIRS, ETC. I POINTED OUT THAT WITH THE OPENING OF THE EXPOSITION SO NEAR, IT WAS IMPORTANT THAT SPOKANE KNOW THE FRENCH DECISION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, BUT WHAT WAS MOST IMPORTANT WAS A FAVORABLE DECISION.

3. WHILE IT WILL BE DEEPLY DISAPPOINTING TO SPOKANE, AS IT IS TO US, TO HAVE ANOTHER TEMPORIZING REPLY FROM THE FRENCH, I SEE NO ALTERNATIVE BUT TO ALLOW GISCARD AND THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT TO CONTINUE TO CONSIDER THE PROBLEM FOR SEVERAL MORE WEEKS. I MUST ADD THAT OUR OWN ESTIMATE IS THAT THE FINAL RESPONSE WILL PROBABLY BE NEGATIVE, AND I BELIEVE IT WOULD BE PRUDENT FOR THE ORGANIZERS OF THE EXPOSITION TO PLAN ACCORDINGLY. I BELIEVE THAT ANY FURTHER REPRESENTATIONS TO THE FRENCH AUTHORITIES WOULD NOT BE HELPFUL OR DESIRABLE.

DECONTROL DECEMBER 31, 1976.

IRWIN

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